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GOD'S PLAIN REQUIREMENTS.

IF we walk abroad on the face of the earth, we find many things of whose origin and use we may be in doubt; but, if we find a pure spring of living water, no matter where, we can judge and enjoy that fully and thoroughly. If it be a spring which has been used as long as men can trace its history, which has always poured forth an abundant flow of the best water; never dry in summer, and never frozen in winter; never bad to the taste, and never harmful to the drinker, — there will be but one sensible opinion about it; and that will be not hard to form. It will be called a good spring, and will be sought and used as such. The exact source and cause of its flow may be unknown, but all intelligent persons will understand that its waters once floated in clouds; that they fell to the earth in rain; that they ran into the ground; and that they simply run out, or are forced out, in the spring. Common knowledge of the laws of things in nature makes it perfectly evident that this pure spring-water was originally made by the meeting and union of the elements of water, — oxygen and hydrogen; that the particles of water took the form of

a light and invisible vapor under the heat of the sun, and rose above the heavier air; that the vapor became condensed into drops which fell by their own weight, sank into the ground by the same force, and ran together into some place in the earth, from which the outlet was to the surface of the ground; thus making the spring a simple result of the laws of nature.

In the times of ignorance, it was possible for men to imagine that a wonderful spring had a supernatural origin; but now all know perfectly that good water is a simple thing, and that a good spring is no miracle. Any one who should say now, that a god or a goddess dwelt in a fountain, and caused the fine flow of pure water, would justly be accused of superstition. It would be said, "There is one God, the Creator of all things, the Author of the laws of nature; and the existence and flow of these waters is one of the simple results of the operation of nature's laws. The water of this wonderful spring is mere water after all, though so pure, so abundant, and so unfailing; and there is no wonder in the spring which does not result from the same laws which govern the existence and flow of all springs. The water may surpass all other in purity, and there may be no spring equal to this; yet the same system of nature which gives other springs gives this: it is but one instance, though the best, of this particular work of God in nature. It is common sense to use this water as far as possible; but it is not common sense to find a god or a goddess in the fountain. The Author of this is the God who is equally the Author of all: the means he uses in this is the system of nature which he uses in all." Such would be the statement which every intelligent person would assent to in regard to a spring of water. In support of it, all would confidently appeal to common sense, and to the well-known facts of the operation of the laws of nature.

It would easily be proved that the vapor, which rises unseen, gathers in clouds, and falls in rain, and simply runs from place to place under ground until it runs out in a spring as naturally as possible. He must be very ignorant who can imagine that any part of the matter is due to miracle; he must be ignorant of God's work in nature who piously fancies the spring miraculous.

Truth comes to men by coming out in the mass of men, or in human history, as water comes forth from the ground in springs. The plain truth of God is like water in this, — that it is a universal necessity to man, and a universal gift of God: as soon as the mind sees it, it is seen to be good; as soon as the mind studies it, it is proved to be good. I do not mean that men are not ignorant and mistaken in regard to plain truth.

I do not mean that all see and accept plain truth: I speak just as I would speak in regard to water. How much could be said upon the ignorance, folly, and sin of men in regard to water! How many do not possess common knowledge as to water and springs of water! How many do not rightly value and use this gift of God to the body! How much water is there, too, which is made poor, or even bad and useless, by some cause! And yet there is common knowledge of plain truth in regard to water; and all either do or may know what water is, and what good water is, and also that good water is a universal necessity to man, and gift of God. One fact at least is clear, — that good water falls from the clouds in rain, and that it is just what we need: another fact is easily proved, — that the water which falls from the clouds makes our springs, and makes good springs, unless something in the earth adds an impurity to the water. We may say, that, upon the whole, it makes good springs, though few or none may be perfectly pure.

So must we speak of truth; it comes in the mind of man as the rain comes upon the face of the earth; it comes from the hints and lessons which are, in the world of mind, what vapor and clouds are in the physical world. Man keeps thinking, — now more, now less, — and the rain of ideas never fails. The laws God has established for the action of the human mind have this result, that man is always receiving knowledge. It comes in drops; but the drops make showers, and the showers streams, for ever flowing in the history and the heart of man. Not to make our illustrations too wide, the drops of knowledge which are made of the vapor of human guesses at truth finally make springs of plain truth. None of these springs may be quite pure; and yet they are not less springs of truth, of the truth which we need, and which God evidently means us to have.

No doubt there is much ignorance, folly, and sin among men in regard to plain truth. A common knowledge of the plainest truth is wanting with very many. Very many do not care to have or to heed plain truth; and with many the plain truth is mixed with error, sometimes with so much error that the force of the truth is almost lost. It is just as it is with water; and yet there is a common knowledge now of the plain truth of God; and all either do or may know that there is plain truth, and what it is, and also that it is a necessity for all, and the gift of God to all. Common sense, and the well-known facts of the workings of the human mind, amply sustain the assertion that the plain truth of God is within our reach as truly as water is; and, by the simple and universal gift of God through the laws of our spiritual nature, we may miss having it just as we may miss having wholesome water. Something in men may make all the springs of truth somewhat impure, and sometimes foul and hurtful to the soul;

and yet the general fact remains perfectly evident to the intelligent mind, that the water of life, the living truth, does fall upon the human mind, and does come forth in all the history of man in good springs.

There are two things which especially sustain this assertion, — the action of conscience, and the existence of faith in Deity. The universality of these two facts is like the universality of rain. No doubt, many of our race are below the level of conscience and religious feeling. But these do not disprove the rule. At the level of common intelligence, where men are manifestly men, they manifest some conscience, and some faith in Deity. As they rise in intelligence, they grow in conscience, and in faith toward the Divine. They may fail to understand their duties, and many fail to perform them. They may have but a poor knowledge of the true God, and may make wretched superstition of religion. And yet the two grand facts remain, as clouds and showers remain, though men drink muddy water or poisonous rum. Conscience may become the sword of the Moslem, and religion the fury of cruel slaughter, as the cloud becomes a tempest, and the rain a desolation; yet conscience and religion are none the less results of God's laws in the nature of man.

And, however little the common first appearing of conscience and faith may indicate a divine work of revelation, the progress of these removes all doubt. Everywhere in the history of man, we find springs of truth in regard to duty and God. The feeling which is a mist or a drop in most minds has gathered fulness in a more active and more elevated mind, and breaks out in a fountain. In almost all cases, these may be mere little springs, and not pure at that; but they are none the less springs of truth, and springs caused by God's laws in the nature of man. They may be mere springy places in human history

full of the feeling that there is duty for man, and that there is Deity, but pouring out no right knowledge of that duty or of God. But still the fact abides, a grand fact, a simple result of God's laws, that the water of life saturates the soil of humanity.

If you scoop out a hole in a place where water springs to the surface, but forms no fountain, you may perhaps dip up only muddy water; but it is you that make the water muddy. So, in the false teaching upon duty and faith, which we see in the less enlightened fields of history; there was feeling in that soil, which God caused, though priest and philosopher may have muddied it in reducing it to theory and practice. It is very much to have the human mind full of the feeling of duty and of Deity. It shows that God has made man so that this feeling must come in him as his mind grows and gains. The rain descends as upon a desert: the lessons of God, in the world and in life, are lost to sight in impressions which we cannot trace; but these impressions gather, and at length show themselves in the saturation of the whole mind and surface of life with religious feeling. The history of mankind is full of places where the water of life springs to the surface, though it fail to give a clear flow. Paul found this the case in Athens. The Greeks had much disposition to religion, though they had so little of the pure knowledge of the true God. Conscience and faith come to the surface of humanity, though so little acted out and thought out in a good way. All over the world, there is some sense of duty and some religious feeling, wherever the human mind acts enough to show its tendencies.

And there are some real springs of truth breaking out in souls who have deeper feeling and more thought than the mass; in which we see, beyond question, the right action of conscience and the true exercise of faith, a real flow of the

water of living truth. The best men, under every form of tolerably enlightened religion, have been such springs of truth, though in hardly any case have these springs poured forth pure truth. The great Hebrew teachers, some of the Greek, Roman, and Oriental teachers, and many Christian teachers, have been such springs of truth; some less, and some more pure. We find utterances of conscience and of faith which are as pure as human conception can well be. We find other utterances, which are truth, with some mingling of error. But everywhere it is evident that the plain truth of good and of God has come into the heart, and is breaking forth from the mind. As you see that a spring is a spring, and readily ascertain that it is a spring of water, — though the water may be muddy, or, if clear, may be impure to the taste, — so do you see without difficulty, that the mind of the prophet, philosopher, or lawgiver, is a fountain of truth, though the utterance of it may not be clear, or, if clear, may not be entirely correct. The activity of conscience and faith is evidently a good flow of truth; though in it some error, or even much error, may mingle. In this way it becomes wholly evident that plain truth does come among men, as springs of water come on the face of the earth.

I have assumed that plain truth is truth of conscience, and of faith in God. Whatever elaborate truth may be, the plain truth for all souls, — the plain truth of God, — is, that we must do duty and serve God. We leave behind all the systems of doctrine, or rather we do not come to them. They are the spring-houses which men build by speculation over the springs. They are no part of God's plain requirements. If they are God's requirements at all, they are, at least, not plain. The plain requirements are to do good and to love God. In the language of the Hebrew prophet, "What doth the Lord require of thee

but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Or, in the words of Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

This is the plain truth of God, which is to the soul what water is to the body. It is this which God causes to come into the mind of man, as he sends rain on the earth. It is this which breaks forth in the best men, everywhere and always, — a fountain of living truth. It is this which we can recognize and accept merely by understanding it, as easily as we recognize and accept water from a spring. It is this which we do recognize and do accept in all who seek to do good and to serve God. It is this which we ought to recognize and accept, wherever it may appear, as the plain truth, revealed by God himself to the minds of men. It is this on which all depends, — all the life which a perfect law can point out, and all the life which prophecy can anticipate.

This plain truth of God comes to mankind all the time for ever from God himself. They may be slow to comprehend and to obey it; but God none the less sends his rain of heavenly impressions on the conscience and heart of men. When they do comprehend and obey it, all ascription is to be unto Him who made the soil of the mind, and caused fountains of truth to break forth in it. The nature of things in the soul and in the soul's world, as God has made this, is that to which all pure knowledge of plain truth is due. There is no second or third god at the bottom of the fountain, not even in the minds of Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, and Paul. The spring is no miracle, not even when it pours out a full stream of the pure water of living truth.

It is an instance of God's way with man, just as the famous spring of water is an instance of God's way in nature.

It is from ignorance of the way in which God sends inspiration somewhat in all minds, and causes many springs of truth to break forth, that men suppose there is a special supernatural origin for the Hebrew and Christian fountains. God himself, by the influence of Spirit which he himself is, is at the bottom of these fountains, the source of truth and of life in all of them; but that is all. Is not that enough? And that, we bless God, is the case with all, — with even our humblest fountains. It is the case with our merely springy places of thought and of life, where we feel after God, if haply we may find him. He is our inspiration; and from him is all our knowledge of truth. If we know little, it is from him. Our guesses are elicited by his suggestions in the life he gives us, as the vapor is lifted into the sky by the sun's heat. Our first thoughts come from those hints, as the drops of rain form in the clouds which float across the face of heaven. Our lasting impressions arise with the recurrence of these thoughts, as the many drops make the shower. Our deep conviction and feeling come from these impressions, as the descending rain fills the spring. Our clear faith and pure force of spirit are the outbreak of a fountain which he has filled. We all, along with the world's great men of faith and grand masters of pure vigor of spirit, depend on God's universal presence and inspiration. He is the sole miracle; and he is this divine source of truth to every soul. The one cause is the universal inspiration of God. The one result in all is the plain truth of God, the action of conscience and faith in the conduct of life and the growth of religion.

The teachers of doctrine, who build their houses of dogma and ceremony over the famous fountains of Hebrew

and Christian history, who make a special Holy Ghost the god of these fountains, and say that all other fountains have no god at all, get far away from the facts of plain truth. They put their system for truth, their spring-house for the spring. They fail to see how simple plain truth is, and how naturally God causes it to come into the mind of man. They have no suspicion of the way his laws make it to gather in human hearts, and to break forth from the deep places of conscience and faith. They do not see that Moses and Jesus are only wonderful fountains of that water of life which God has put into humanity as he has put vapor, clouds, rain, and springs into the physical world. They think these marvellous springs are miracles, and that all other springs are nothing. They build their spring-houses, — Romanism, Episcopalianism, Orthodoxy; and each church says the real miracle-fountain is under its house of faith. They used to tear down each other's houses, and doom each other to hell for not building over the right spring.

Look at them. Highest up on the stream of Christian truth is Romanism. Next below is Episcopalianism. Next to that is Orthodoxy; and below that are Universalists, Unitarians, Spiritualists, &c., camped out almost anywhere that they find a chance to dip a cup into the stream. Romanism has the most of a building, more church and more authority than any of the others; and they think least of all of the plain truth which needs no building to make it flow.

Episcopalianism joins on to Romanism in the high church, and to Orthodoxy in the low church, and is quite a building; but no more necessary than the other to keep the spring in full flow. Bishop Colenso has dug a well behind the Church, and finds that the water of life, the plain truth of God, dips up very good indeed, just as well as under

the church-roof. The church-keepers have prosecuted him for digging his well; but the Queen's Judicial Committee have decided, that there is no law against getting good water wherever you can find it. So papers have been passed round for the clergy to sign, which say that the Bishop's well has no water in it at all; and the scientific men have been asked to sign a paper declaring that a well can't be dug at all: but God's plain truth comes all the same, spite of the votes of priests; nor does it come under church-roofs alone, but to all who earnestly seek it. Episcopalianism can have all it wants; but it cannot keep it to itself.

Orthodoxy is much less of a building than the others; but the keepers of it claim that they have built just where all the springs meet, and where the stream runs most full and pure; and they are perfectly sure, just as sure as if they knew it, that their building keeps the stream and makes a house for the god of the fountain. True, the water comes up outside of their walls in great abundance; and half the people dip it up outside, and do not know the difference. Mr. Beecher found the venerable old building gloomy and unwholesome to stay in. He is clear out on the lower side, where the stream flows out into the camping-ground of the liberals. He goes all the way down among the liberal camps, and dips up good water with the cups of Channing and Chapin, or even of Parker and Emerson. Now and then, he tries to get as near as he can to his old Orthodoxy; but, if he runs in a moment, he runs out again in a shiver. Most of the time, he only tries to get under the shadow of Orthodoxy; but even that he does not like. He sees the sun of human progress high in the heavens, and the stream of plain truth flowing on in the open light; and he likes to go along its banks, anywhere that he can dip a cup of water for one of God's little ones.

The old buildings will stand a good while; but they can no more hide the water of life. The fact of plain truth is not revealed by God to a few to be kept, but to all hearts and all minds. Any one can see what plain truth is, and how good it is; and can keep it as God requires, not in Romanism or Episcopalianism or Orthodoxy, but in the heart and in the life.

That is a significant word to the woman of Samaria, that the words of Jesus should be in her a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. True words dig down into the heart of man, and strike the springs of conscience and faith. They dig down to that effect of God's presence in the soul which we call inspiration. They call forth out of the mind itself the flow of feeling and conviction. They open the deep fountains of clear faith and pure spiritual life. But see how men have misunderstood all this. Their idea has been, that the well in the soul is merely a place in which to keep holy water got from the church miracle-springs. Such a thing as a spring at the bottom of this well is not to be thought of: it is rationalism and sin. If one comes there, its water must be stopped out with church-cement. If a man digs deeper than other men, and finds more and more water, and really has what the words of Jesus referred to, — a well of pure truth in himself, — the churches pronounce his case hopeless.

But the fact remains, that all true teaching digs down to the springs of plain truth in the soul of man; and that all good words of true teachers are to be used in building up the sides of this well, not in stopping out truth at the bottom. This also is a fact, that we must seek and obey truth in order to have it in good flow. We must dig our well of thought and belief by earnest study and earnest love of plain truth. We must dig down in the place of

conscience and faith: it is there that water is to be found; not in the dry places of speculation, nor in the stony places of dogmatism. We may use, and will use, the good words of prophets and apostles, and of the Master of faith, in the walls of our well; but we must first make it as deep as possible, and be sure to have a clear spring at the bottom. For the spirit of truth received in the soul, and breaking forth in conscience and faith, is the true life which is the gift of God, the gospel of Jesus, and the need of the world.

"RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCES"

(ONCE MORE).

An article appeared in the June number of the "Monthly Journal," entitled "Religious Performances," in which the author endeavored to show that spiritual life could be most successfully cultivated in the soul and in the church, independently of forms. So far as the article produced any effect, it must have been to destroy all respect for all sacred rites, for periodical worship as such, and for the manifold and thoroughly tested Christian appliances in the use of which the soul forms habits of reverence, aspiration, and trust. It is but a repetition of the attempt, now frequently made, to show that forms are inimical to life,—are not its necessary expression. But, in fairness to the author, he should be allowed to define his own position.

"Perhaps I am a Quaker," he says, "and something more. 'The Spirit giveth life;' and life is the main thing.

"'But shall we not have forms?' Yes, if we have life, it will be sure to manifest itself; and the manifestation of

life will always be in some form or other. Never trouble yourself about the forms, but seek first, last, and always, for *life*, and all other things shall be added. I only pray that we may have *life*, and that we may have it more abundantly. This is the one thing needful for all our churches. We have machinery enough: the power to drive it must me into our souls from God out of heaven. All the form we have without life is only so much more death.

"But only the Spirit giveth life. (I mean *the* Spirit, with a capital S.) Many a man and many a church may have put life into a form: but neither man nor church ever got life out of a form; for a form has no life to give.

"If there are those who defend rites and ordinances as positive commandments, . . . to such I say, Go your ways in peace; eat your celestial saw-dust; make no wry faces, if you can help it; pronounce it manna, and be blessed. Have I not also fed on the same, and found life in spite of it?

"If for babes in soul it is necessary that they should steady themselves in part, while learning to walk, by taking hold of some ordinance or rite or form; or if some of the family are weak, and can walk better by the help of crutches, — let us even join them in thanking God for the strength which is made perfect in weakness, and let them know how rejoicingly they are welcomed as fellow-travellers Zionward. It still remains true, that no crutch gives strength, though weakness may lean upon it, and, while leaning, may receive strength. Legs and feet, in good running order, are better, for all that; and, for those who can use them, they are an all-sufficient 'ordinance,' of the very divinest divine appointment. Happy the child who has outgrown leading-strings, and who can balance himself without a chair! Happy the man who is independent of a crutch! . . .

"But forms give no strength. If there should seem to be a sense in which this is not wholly true, that is precisely the sense in which I wish to affirm it as *most* true; and should a thousand dear and devout brethren and sisters in the precious faith declare that their experience contradicts this, then I must make so bold as to contradict, if not their experience, at least their way of reporting it. Confronting them in love, I must say, No: you have received life while using forms, and sometimes in spite of forms, but never *from* forms. . . .

"Herein lie the folly and the danger of all human contrivances to invigorate worship. They are meant well; but they fail, and turn to positive mischief, because the tide of attention will set toward the artificial sign rather than toward the thing meant to be signified. . . .

"While bewildered multitudes are seeking vainly for the true religion, the true salvation, the true Christ, and the true heaven, in creeds, authorities, ordinances, churches, sabbaths, sacraments, sanctuaries, Bibles, and the saying of prayers, — as though these could give life, — what do we more than others, what do we but add to the Babel of noises, if we can only say, 'See! here is more of the same sort; here are improved models of the same machines for grinding out faith and worship: we offer you another set of forms; we issue an improved edition of the Gospel of Outwardness'?"

The idea that runs through all these extracts is, that the Holy Spirit, the life of God, comes into the souls of men in the normal state, most freely and spontaneously, independently of forms; that it abhors and shuns forms; that the very air is full of spiritual life, which is seeking to incarnate itself in man, if it can do so without the aid of symbol or conduit. But the moment an attempt is made to "prepare the way of the Lord," or to open the soul to

the Spirit's flow by impressing it through the bodily senses, it is frightened away. According to the doctrine of this essay, it is as impossible to represent spiritual things by forms and symbols, and thus to assist the soul, as to bottle up the hues of the rainbow for a microscopic examination in the parlor. It is quite time that the groundlessness of this flippant style of talking about the incompatibility between spiritual life and forms was fully disclosed, as it is exerting a very pernicious influence over many minds.

Would it not be well to let Nature teach us? In her domain, do we discover that life is afraid of forms? Does it dodge about, eluding expression? Has she not a very quiet yet most effective method of disposing of forms after life is extinct? Are lifeless forms so numerous as to be troublesome? Is it so easy to mistake a dead form for a living one, that it is necessary to assure people continually that there is a difference between them? Is he susceptible of harm from the misapprehension, who could mistake a mummy for a living man? Does Nature teach aught of an abstract life-power or principle? Does she even hint of any kind of life that is independent of forms? What is life in Nature but the power that is continually organizing the elements? Has it any other function? Does it render any other service?

Or what should we think of the man, who, complaining that his vines and trees were in an unhealthy condition, and produced inferior fruit, on being advised to graft and prune and cultivate them according to their known nature and wants, should reply, "I never trouble myself about forms; I do not believe in forms: I only pray that my garden may have life, and have it more abundantly"? Or of the emaciated and staggering invalid, who, on being advised by his physician to take the proper remedies, — a nutritious diet, and needful and regular exercise and

rest,— should reply, "That is not what I need; you do not understand my case: I only pray that I may have life and strength"?—as though his collapsed and wrinkled skin could in some mysterious manner, and in defiance of forms, be distended with vitality as a life-preserver is filled with air. Or what should we think of him who should demolish the battery, and cut down the telegraph, exclaiming, "Never trouble yourself about forms; I am independent of such human contrivances: I demand my message"?

How is a dormant intellect quickened? Do the languages and the sciences, all unheralded and unsymbolized, march up, and flood it with a knowledge of themselves, and surcharge it with life and power? Can intellectual life be taken like a dram, or passively received by the quantity? Are any suddenly aroused from mental stupor, surprised to find themselves eminent scholars and philosophers? Would the aspirant for academic honors, he who was diligently seeking for the highest experiences of the intellect, show himself a very Solon, if, on being directed to give his attention to language and science, to apparatus and cabinets, to commune with the ablest men of the world through the symbols of their thoughts and the facts they have discovered, he should reply, "You utterly misapprehend my purpose: having seen the folly and danger of all human contrivances for invigorating the mind, I shall not trouble myself about forms, but simply pray that I may have intellectual life, and that I may have it more abundantly"?

It may at least be doubted whether he would be commended for his wisdom. But why not? Cannot God fill and inspire the intellect as well as the heart, independently of forms? Indeed, is not the intellect the door through which God himself seeks to approach the soul? Is there any thing in nature or human experience analogous in the

least to this new method of filling the soul with "power from God out of heaven"? One would suppose that questions like these would suggest themselves to those who are so very fearful that the dead will be mistaken for the living; who exhort us so earnestly to disregard religious forms, and to seek, first, last, and always, for "the descending life."

Let us suppose a case. A blind and deaf mute has lived for thirty years, surrounded by the very sweetest Christian influences; but so many avenues to his soul have been closed, that no attempt has ever been made to impart to him an idea of spiritual things. He has never been injured by any "human contrivance for invigorating worship," or human "machines for grinding out faith;" and yet he is as susceptible of all those influences that come to the heart independently of "human contrivances" as any person. Now, the question is, not what God *can* do for a soul, but what he *does* do, and *how* he does it; and I would ask the author of "Religious Performances" if he has any reason to suppose that he would find this unfortunate man filled with "the descending life," or that he had the faintest conception of spiritual things? What, in his case, of "the power" that "comes into the soul from God out of heaven"? Furthermore, if the author of that article is a religious teacher, I should rejoice to see him test upon this unwindowed soul his theory of the mode of receiving and imparting spiritual influences. He is the most proper of all subjects on whom to test it. He can be filled with "power from God out of heaven" as full and as easily as any other person, if forms are only hinderances to the Spirit's copious flow. Let him take his seat beside him, and ascertain how much he knows of God, of a true spiritual experience. He will have no occasion to use language; for it is a form, and its use an observance,

both of which are to be discarded as "crutches." He will not need to go through "the motions;" for they are only signs of life, or symbols of thought, and are not what he needs, but life itself. Like "ordinances, churches, sabbaths, sacraments, Bibles, and the saying of prayers," language and gestures are only the signs of ideas, and "belong to the Gospel of Outwardness" which is to be rejected. Now, how much of the life of God has this unfortunate creature? What does he know of "the gentle inward constraining"? I would not say that he knows nothing; but, according to this theory, we should expect to find him the *very highest type of Christian.*

This illustrates the utter fallacy of supposing, that it is desirable or possible to dispense with the forms or symbols of ideas, or of historic facts, or of divine influences. The whole difference between the mental and spiritual conditions of the person in the case supposed, and that of the most profound and devout Christian philosopher, results solely from the use of forms and symbols, and almost wholly from "human contrivances."

But ordinances are condemmed: they are contemp tuously styled "crutches," "leading-strings," "chairs by which babes in soul steady themselves while learning to walk," but of which men have no need, and, for themselves, ought to be ashamed. But what is the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? It is confessedly the sign of a great historic fact. Are the six letters which make up Christ's name any thing more? I do not doubt that that name has thrilled and inspired our brother many, *many* times; I do not doubt that its manifold and continually multiplying suggestions have been the themes of his holiest meditations, and occasioned the sweetest and loftiest aspirations he has ever experienced. But why? It is only a form, an "artificial sign of the thing meant to be signified," —

nothing but ink and paper. On what principle does he cast aside the bread and wine, as unmeaning, if not actually pernicious, and still use the ink and paper? He talks much of the Spirit, and wishes to have the word written with a capital S; but what does he know of the Spirit more than the poor mute in the case supposed, except what he has learned of it from the signs and mediums through which it has been communicated to him? And why insist upon the capital S? It is only a sign: it certainly "belongs to the Gospel of Outwardness." It is a "crutch," a "chair," something "to lean upon." Baptism is also rejected as an ordinance without "religious efficacy," because it "belongs to the Gospel of Outwardness." Has our brother made the printed Sermon on the Mount, the real ink and paper, a part of the "Gospel of Inwardness"? And, if he accepts the ink and paper because of their representative character (and that is their sole value), on what ground does he reject the bread and wine of the sacrament, and the water of baptism? Are the ink and paper not quite as much of a "human contrivance for invigorating worship"? Are they not as much of an "artificial sign of the thing meant to be signified"? Will our brother tell us how he can impart to another any idea of God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or the descending life, without an "artificial sign of the thing meant to be signified"? Ah, yes: that word "Christ;" the sacrament that speaks of his death; baptism that signifies the inward vow of consecration to him; that capital S, — are strong and helpful crutches to the weak souls that are fainting on their way to the fountain of life. But is it not rather ungracious, after finding our way to the very summit of the Mount of Transfiguration, and experiencing the blessedness of being with Christ, to turn about in our "glorious self-consciousness," and insult the guides he furnished

for our ascension, without whom the blissful height had never been reached?

But the author speaks of "bewildered multitudes who are vainly seeking for the true religion, the true salvation, the true Christ, and the true heaven in — Bibles." In this I find less from which to dissent. I should think that "Bibles" would "bewilder" the "multitudes" exceedingly, that were thus seeking; and that, the greater the number, the more complete the bewilderment. I am somewhat "bewildered," however, by a logical inference. If they who seek for the true religion and the true Christ in *the* Bible are "bewildered," because they seek where they are not to be found (which is obviously the doctrine of the essay), then, of course, "the true religion and the true Christ" are best known to those who have had no Bible to "bewilder" them. Perhaps the South-Sea Islanders, and the tribes of Central Africa, may yet send missionaries to teach us "the true religion and the true Christ." But will the author of "Religious Performances" tell us where he obtained any knowledge or conception of Christ, or of the Spirit with a capital S, outside of *the* Bible?

Again: the notion that the life of God comes into the soul most freely, without method or symbol, belongs to the *old régime*, and *not* to the new, as the author intimates. It is utterly subversive of the doctrine of psychological hygiene, — of the consecutive and orderly development of the soul, according to the well-known laws of its being. It is one of the vagaries of the revival system, which fosters the hope of reaping without sowing, and encourages the belief that the relations between cause and effect do not prevail in the realm of the Spirit. It divides, arbitrarily, the mental from the spiritual faculties, and prescribes for the former according to *one* system of practice, and for the latter according to a *very different* one. It recognizes

a responsive or recuperative power in the intellect, which makes it a proper subject for educational processes, but none in the soul. Only "power from God out of heaven" will answer for this, as though the power that makes the evening prayer of childhood, memorized long before its meaning was fully comprehended, and repeated a thousand times, — the "Peace-be-still" of riper years, — were not "from God out of heaven" as truly as though it had been miraculously and authoritatively breathed upon the turbulent sea of the soul, instantly producing a "great calm." Is it generally believed that the earth is receiving more or less "power from God out of heaven," since the theory of a perpetually evolving and rising life from inferior forms was substituted for that of its sudden creation and completion?

Is the intellect less divine than the heart?— less in need of divine inspiration? This is the *old* doctrine. But Liberal Christianity represents *all* that is essential to humanity as divine, and fosters and encourages every instrumentality which truly educates it. Law, literature, science, music, beauty, art, are expressions of the Infinite Mind, which widen and deepen the spiritual sense. Liberal Christianity teaches that the education of *all* the human faculties is necessary to wholeness and symmetry of character. Cultivate the emotions alone, and we have piety without principle, intelligence, or stability. Cultivate the intellect alone, and we have a stoic who is about as much like the loving, hating, — laughing, weeping, — reasoning, worshipping, — believing, doubting, — hoping, despairing creature God made and called a man, as a marble statue. Cultivate both alike and thoroughly, and we have the very highest type of character.

Now, is not one system of practice applicable or inapplicable alike to *all* the faculties of our immaterial nature, to

the head as well as to the heart? If we should be chary of form and symbol and expression, while seeking to awaken in our souls a deeper and truer interest in spiritual things; if we should abhor and avoid all "human contrivances for invigorating worship," all "artificial signs of the things meant to be signified," while seeking the highest spiritual knowledge and experience, — should we not, by parity of logic, extinguish our sight or retire to a dungeon to increase and intensify our love of the beautiful? Should we not discard books, instruments, cabinets, apparatus, teachers, and all the symbols and depositories of thought, as dangerous "human contrivances," and closing our eyes, and stopping our ears, depend solely upon "power from God out of heaven" as the best means of superinducing a high mental culture and experience, and of exciting a truer appreciation of music?

But we are told that "many a man and many a church have put life into a form: but neither man nor church ever got life out of a form; for a form has no life to give." Precisely how it is that a form into which life is put, has no life to give, is not very clear. It is a specimen of reasoning not highly creditable to a teacher of teachers, and a reformer of reformers. But it is not true, either as a scientific or theological statement, that a form has no life to give. In the entire animal and vegetable kingdoms, form is the sole depository and expression of life; and, instead of being unable to impart it, nothing else can impart it. This will not be denied.

Again: though springs do not *create* water, they furnish it notwithstanding; and yet, if the author had advised us to trust to the falling dew, or to the moisture that is borne about on the wings of the wind, instead of the ever fresh and flowing fountains which "human contrivance" has made available, he would have evinced as true a compre-

hension of our convenience and necessity, as when he attempts to teach the soul's independence of forms. Thought is form in one sense. It naturally takes form. It can neither fully comprehend itself, nor make itself understood without. There is no way in which thought can be preserved or transmitted, or nature or history studied, but in symbols. Indeed, history, Agassiz's museum, and the multiplication table, are "artificial signs of the things meant to be signified," — "human contrivances" for enlightening and invigorating the mind. It is very doubtful whether we can think independently of forms. As soon as we begin to reason concerning God, heaven, or the human soul; justice, purity, forgiveness; light, electricity, or attraction, — our thought takes form. We judge of the immaterial by the material. We reason from the known to the unknown. What we believe was suggested by what we know. Faith or speculation would be impossible without knowledge. It is the testimony of all the blind from birth, that they have not the faintest idea of colors, and for the obvious reason that they have no criteria by which to judge, no knowledge upon which to base an opinion. They cannot, therefore, reason concerning colors. So, he who teaches that we can meditate more correctly and more profitably upon sacred things as mere abstractions; upon God, heaven, spirituality, purity; or aspire more earnestly and truly to a high type of Christian character; or seek more successfully "the power that comes down from God out of heaven," independently of forms, symbols, sacraments, ordinances, sabbaths, Bibles, hymns, and the saying of prayers, and numberless other "contrivances" which experience has shown us do "invigorate worship," do excite and foster the spirit of reverence and true piety, — labors to upturn the very grounds of human consciousness, and therefore butts againts Gibraltar.

Why not ridicule the soldier, who, weary and faint and foot-sore, is actually nerved by music and the advancing flag to one more furious charge, for which, without the fresh inspiration of shout and song and symbol, he could no more summon strength than he could make a world? Or when he returns from a Southern prison, and his manly breast heaves as he comes in sight of the dear old flag, and, from patriotic devotion, he sheds tears upon it, and kisses its sacred folds, why not tell him that it is only bunting, — the merest form? — that *true patriotism* is what he needs, and *not* this very "artificial sign of the thing signified"? Or when he has been in the service two or three years, and a friend visits him, bearing the likeness of his wife and child, and a score of precious reminders of the loved family and home; and as his bosom swells with emotion, and the great manly tears of affection fall while he presses that likeness to his heart, and we see that his inmost soul is stirred, — why not tell him that he is very foolish, that the likeness is *only* pasteboard, a mere form, a "human contrivance to invigorate" affection which "has no life to give"? Why not tell him that it is not letters or likenesses or remembrancers of *any* kind that he needs; that these all belong to the "Gospel of Outwardness;" that he is simply "to pray first, last, and always," for the feelings of the *true husband* and *father*?

Let us substitute the words "patriotism" and "affection," for the word "worship," and see how the philosophy of our author will appear. "*Herein lie the folly and the danger of all human contrivances, banners, transparencies, music, songs, drills, reviews, letters, likenesses, love-tokens, to invigorate patriotism and affection. They are meant well; but they turn to positive michief, because the tide of attention will set towards the artificial sign, rather than towards the thing meant to be signified.*"

Now, if I were sure that the men of the Unitarian denomination, if they were in the Federal army, would really be in danger of mistaking the flag of their country, or the likenesses of their wives and children, for "the things meant to be signified," I should feel it to be very important to assure them that the bread and wine of the communion are *not* the literal flesh and blood of Christ; nor the baptism of water, the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. But, as I am inclined to think they could make the necessary distinction in the former case, I should apprehend no difficulty in the latter.

And if the flag *is* valuable as a symbol to the most patriotic soldier; if letters and likenesses and various mementos *are* dear to all loving hearts, because they invigorate affection, — "human contrivances" though they are; if thought can be preserved and truth best studied only in form and symbol; and, moreover, if the sole yet unspeakable difference between the savage and the philosopher results from the latter having learned to interpret the signs through which alone the thoughts and events of the past, the laws of nature, the facts of science, and God himself, are revealed, — surely he has a difficult task who would persuade us, that in defiance of all the methods of acquiring a knowledge of other subjects, and of entering upon other joyful experiences, the soul that is seeking the true religion and the true Christ has only to discard all "human contrivances," to close all the avenues of ordinary approach to itself, and, resigning itself to the inward constraining, wriggle right into the very highest spiritual condition.

The air is full of electricity; but he alone feels the current who connects himself with the battery. The principles upon which the science of music is based are abstractions; but he alone feels the inspiring power of

music to whom it is borne by the instrument or orchestra. So there are places and special "human contrivances" through which divine influence pours, — conduits of the Holy Spirit. No fact is more legitimately deducible from church history, or truer to our individual experience. The Holy Spirit may not come to *all* through its appropriate channels, as the paralytic does not feel the current the battery sends forth, as the unmusical soul receives no inspiration from the organ; still it remains true, that the only place where we are certain of finding the electric current is at the battery, or music, at the place where it is made.

We are shocked by the remark of an Episcopal clergyman of Boston, that his church was "the temporary residence of the Deity." It seems coarse, irreverent, and materialistic; and yet, to the soul that is seeking to know more of God through worship, it approaches nearer to the central truth of Christianity, and is more in conformity with universal Christian experience, than this modern notion that God is everywhere in *general*, but nowhere in *particular;* and that there are no certain media of divine influence. "The Word was made flesh" because it could do vastly more for the world through a *form*, — a physical medium; and though some esteemed Christ as "a root out of dry ground, in which there was no comeliness," others sought him, followed him whithersoever he went, and were blessed by touching the hem of his garment. The reason that all were not blessed alike was *not* that the medium was imperfect or unnecessary, nor yet that those who were not attracted to him received spiritual quickening they knew not how or where, but all were not alike receptive.

Finally: unless dogmatic flippancy is evidence of spiritual mindedness, I shall still believe that divine influence is better sought and more certainly found in systematic

services, in the reverent use of forms and symbols from which a large majority of the ablest and most devout in all Christian communions have, according to their own testimony, derived great profit, than by passive absorption, or the freaks or spasmodic efforts which fancy or frenzy might suggest. I shall still believe, that the purest, the most lovely, and Christ-like souls, and the most earnest and successful laborers through all the Christian era, have been those who believed most profoundly in the church as among the greatest of human necessities, in institutional religion, in ordinances, in the Sabbath, and the numberless "human contrivances for invigorating" faith and worship. I shall believe, what the author of "Religious Performances" would be rash to deny, that the hymns and prayers of childhood, repeated frequently, but not always, as a mere form, have, nevertheless, in numberless cases very greatly influenced all the subsequent life, by assisting the mind to form the habit of acknowledging its dependence upon God. Shall the little evening service be universally abandoned, because it is sometimes, perhaps frequently, only a mere form? Do we not know that the heart is often brought into perfect sympathy with sentiments by compelling the lips frequently to express them?

We need not *less* but *more* and *better* religious forms; and as showing that it is as possible to become as formal without forms as with, and to die the fastest, and to become the most lifeless of all Christians, while relying exclusively upon the Spirit with a capital S, it is only necessary to refer to the Quakers, who are so formal that they do not know what a religious form is, and so dead that they would be horrified at the thought of a resurrection.

THE JOURNAL OF A CANDIDATE.

(Continued.)

CAMBRIDGE, Jan. 19, 1864.

I WAS tired last night, and I fear that my account of a misanthropic companion partook too much of his own irritability. A sound sleep has restored my good-nature, and it would now require an effort to speak disrespectfully of Satan: indeed, I cannot account for the entire change in my mood, without employing the hypothesis that I have revisited the —— family in my dreams. It was late when I reached their house on Saturday evening. Noting the stateliness of the mansion, I went in with many misgivings, expecting to encounter so much ostentation and patronage that I should be constantly perplexed; but all fear vanished the moment I saw the beaming face of my host, and heard the cheery tones of his hearty welcome. Although his hair is a silvery gray, and his weight cannot be less than two hundred pounds, he insisted upon carrying my overcoat and carpet-bag up to my room in the third story, where he staid in the hall until I had made a hurried toilet. Then he escorted me down to the supper-table, where the family, including several tall sons and blooming daughters, were waiting for me as considerately as if I were a minister settled over a parish as large and prosperous as their own. I sat down to that cozy table, spread with tasteful and simple abundance, with an eagerness and confidence which made me question my identity. The household won my affections in a courtship of less than five minutes. "There seemed to be pools of honey about their hearts which lubricated all their speech and action with fine jets of mead." They drew me out with questions concerning Mary and our children; and I told them so many of

little Robbie's quaint and comical sayings, that, eating with the rapidity of pleased listeners, they had finished the meal before my traveller's appetite was half satisfied: but I was encouraged to go on until "I had rattled off some of my most excellent absurdities." Finding that they liked stories, I told about a wild girl, now a famous artist, who, when at a boarding-school, wrote on a card at church, and passed it to her companion, very much to the horror of an officious deacon, who arose from his seat, and, approaching the offending maidens from behind, shook them gently, saying, in one of those awful whispers in which deacons indulge, "What would your parents think of you if they could see you now?" Of course, the girls were indignant, and burned for revenge until they secured it. Morning and afternoon did Miss —— attend services with novel punctuality, until, one day when it was warm and close, she had a satisfaction as vast as that of Wellington at Waterloo, when he put up his field-glass, saying, "The day is ours: let the whole line advance." The unfortunate deacon had succumbed to the heat; and his relentless foe waited until his chin rested heavily on his breast, when she tiptoed across the church to his pew, and, shaking the astonished dignitary by his sacred shoulders, whispered very distinctly, "What would *your* parents think of *you* if they could see you now?" This amused the whole circle. Even Mrs. ——, who is saddened by the death of a favorite niece, came near joining in the merriment: for I saw what Curran would have called, "a fine smile rippling the broad Atlantic of her countenance." But, stout as she is, she retains all the delicacy of expression which marks a refined woman.

Sunday was a happy day. Having nothing at stake, I spoke, with considerable freedom and ease, of "erroneous views of death," and the "victory over sorrow." The only

drawback from my belief that I succeeded, grew out of the complimentary remark of a lady who had requested an introduction. She said, "I assure you, sir, that we have been highly *entertained* to-day." Some persons choose singular terms to express their appreciation of solemn themes.

In the evening, we had sacred music in the parlor; and then Mr. —— gave me a little sketch of his business-career. It seems that, besides his own store, he is President of a bank, and Treasurer of a manufacturing company which employs hundreds of men. He is as vigorous and decided as he is genial, making me think of what Perthes told his wife: "I am persuaded that I am a man born to turn my own wheel and that of others with energy." Yet he is devout and tender; for he had the manliness to read the Scriptures before asking me to lead in their family prayer; and he asked the blessing at the table, although there was a minister in the house. At the Soldiers' Hospital, which we drove to on our way home from church, an armless man told me that no priest could have comforted him as Mr. —— did the day after his second amputation. He said, "The good man bent over me in prayer; and, as he prayed, his warm tears fell on my face, so that it seemed as if mother had come back from the heaven where she has been these fourteen years."

Monday morning, Mr. —— asked me for the check which the Treasurer of the —— Society had called to give me the evening before, saying, "I will cash it for you." I gave it to him, and soon received a roll of bills. Presuming that a man of his accuracy could count out twenty-five dollars correctly, I put the money in my pocket-book without looking at it. When I bought my railroad ticket, the roll seemed rather large; and this led me to examine it as soon as I took my seat in the car. Instead

of twenty-five dollars, I had fifty. The ride back to Boston was a blissful one: I bought a daily paper for the first time since I left W.; but I scarcely cared to read it, my mind was so busy with little plans for the use of the money which had been given in such a delicate way. At once I determined to send thirty dollars to Mary. I met a man from W. on Saturday, who said that she looked somewhat pale and weary; and I know it is not merely anxiety and loneliness: she denies herself too much, there are too few hearty meals, and too many "reconsidered dinners" in her bill of fare. Besides, I know that, if the small quantity of coal which remained in our cellar when I came away has held out to this time, there must have been days when she kept the children in the kitchen, instead of using the sitting-room. It grieves me to think that I cannot provide a servant-girl to relieve her from constant drudgery; but, as it is, we must be content with a woman who comes in every Monday to do the washing. Mary never complains; but, now that I am in luck, she shall take a rest by having a girl for at least a month.

CAMBRIDGE, Jan. 25, 1864.

Yesterday I began my candidating in earnest. The pulpit at —— is by no means a very prominent one: and yet I confess that it has its attractions for me; and I was glad to have an opportunity to preach there for two Sundays. The committee-man, at whose house I was made very comfortable, so far as relates to my bodily wants, was quite severe in his criticisms of some of the ministers who have candidated there lately; and so were several members of the parish who dropped in to see me in a state of comparative repose before they should be called upon to judge my manner while in action. They sneered at good Mr. ——, a most cultivated and spiritual-minded man, whose

"ignorance of the world" had amused them exceedingly. It is true, that, as Sterne said of his father, "he suspected no one: so that you might have cheated him ten times a day, if nine had not been sufficient for your purpose;" but as I had seen him in Boston Saturday afternoon, and he had said many cordial and grateful things of the very men whom I was soon to meet, and who enjoyed ridiculing him, I could scarcely conceal my indignation. As I knew that young ——, who has told me confidentially of his call to the great parish in the city of ——, had preached in this quiet town, I availed myself of their ignorance of his future prosperity by inquiring how *he* impressed them. They were unanimous in declaring that he made no impression at all, and predicted his failure in the work of the ministry. But the best judges are not infallible. Even Garrick considered Mrs. Siddons's early acting a failure; and, when re-engagements were discussed, he said, "Let her go."

Sunday morning I rose early, according to my custom on Sundays, and after earnest prayer that I might not deserve the old sarcasm, "Preaching, for the most part, is the glory of the preacher to show himself a fine man," I looked over my manuscripts so often that the sermons were nearly committed to memory. To avoid painful indecision, I had brought only four discourses with me: of these, two were somewhat ambitious in their style, and two were simple and earnest rather than showy. I acknowledge an hour's struggle; but, at last, I selected the latter two. We had no family prayers; and at breakfast Mr. —— was continually giving me such hints about my voice and manner as made me understand, that, in the services of the day, I was not to declare unto him the whole counsel of God, but he was to bring me to his own standard of pulpit oratory. The vestibule of the church was thronged

when we entered; and I overheard some conjectures about my age and ancestry. I ascended the pulpit-steps with an awkward consciousness that several hundred persons were receiving their "first impressions." Immediately the most oppressive diffidence beset me, although I had preached five hundred times before: I could hardly find any voice to read the first hymn. The reading of the Scriptures was less difficult; but it left me free to notice that there was a constant exchange of looks and words on the part of many of my hearers, and I knew that they were making up their minds. The devotional services are usually what I enjoy most; but yesterday my spirit failed me. The thought that it was generally understood that I was praying to be seen and heard of men was almost stifling; indeed, it was by far the worst of all: I felt like a slave-girl on the auction-block, who knows that all the sanctities of her nature are undergoing inspection and appraisal; and there was a long silence before I could say a word. Then, humbled by my hesitation, and wrenching away my thoughts from the place and scene, I spoke to God almost as if I were alone in my own chamber. By sermon-time, I was fairly desperate: the excitement gave an unnatural pitch to my voice; and I spoke with a rapid monotony, which I regretted, but could not prevent. I shrank from a renewed ordeal in the afternoon; but there was no escape. As I read my text, I thought of a very different passage of Scripture, which is said to have been quoted or paraphrased by Massillon, in his Sermon on Preaching: I mean the passage wherein Joseph says, substantially, "It is not to seek food that ye are come down to Egypt: ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land are ye come."

CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 1, 1864.

Well, I am glad that I have finished my engagement at ——. Yesterday I had more peace of mind, and my delivery must have been much better than it was the Sunday before; but the audiences were smaller, and I saw at once that those who did attend had given their verdict, and were impatient to have another preacher on trial.

CAMBRIDGE, Mar. 7, 1864.

No signs of a parish yet! My old friend —— says, that, if I wish to be settled at once, I must take eggshells or fishskin; but I do not think they would help me at all. One Sunday I preached for a society where they have only a morning service, and received seven dollars and a half for my compensation. The committee-man informed me that they pay fifteen dollars for two services, and at the same rate for one. He is rich, and there is much wealth in the parish; but I wonder if it has ever occurred to them that I may find it difficult to support a family. I know they regard me with kindly feelings; and, as cruelty is out of the question, let me lay the flattering unction to my soul, that they take it for granted that a man of my worth has the ravens for his caterers, or it rains bread from heaven for me. The second Sunday I supplied a city pulpit whilst the pastor of the society was preaching in another city pulpit. His salary is twenty-five hundred dollars, and his house is full of costly gifts: he is taxed for twenty thousand dollars: still he made money out of a poor brother whose income is now less than six hundred dollars; for he received twenty-five dollars, and paid me fifteen. The third Sunday I went a hundred and fifty miles from Boston, paying nine dollars for railroad fare, and bringing back six dollars of my fifteen, to supply my wants at C., and Mary's at W. The fourth Sunday I preached near the

city, and received twelve dollars. Yesterday, having no employment, I gave a minister-at-large a labor of love in the morning, attending a church of the straitest sect in the evening, where I heard doctrines of the most shocking severity. The large assembly proved the strong hold which a terrifying theology has upon the public mind. Selden spoke the truth when he said, that "to preach long, loud, and damnation, is the way to be cried up. We love a man that damns us, and run after him again to save us." As I listened to the torrid sketch of the future destiny, not only of the grossly wicked, but of the uninstructed Heathen and less stringent Christians, remembering that Mary is in distress for more coal, I was sinner enough to recall what I had read the day before in the life of J. P. R.: "It would be well for us Hofers, if we could get some of the fire which we shall have too warm hereafter, in our stores in our lifetime."

In spite of the most rigid economy on my own part and on Mary's, we are running behind. To buy shoes for the children, the dear girl has parted with a gold piece which I gave her in our wooing time; and I have sold some of my books at a second-hand bookstore, to buy a garment which I have needed for a long while. I have slackened my correspondence with cherished friends to save stationery and postage-stamps. In order to learn the news, I visit the reading-rooms of the hotels in turn, so as not to attract attention by frequent calls at any one; and sometimes I go to the Athenæum, where I do not half enjoy the papers, because I am not a proprietor. Stolen fruit is not sweet when there is any activity of conscience; and I dread the shame of being turned out of places where I have no clear right to go: still I cannot be ignorant of what is going on in such times as these.

(To be continued.)

MEANING OF THE LATE ELECTION.

The late presidential election, which has so agitated the mind and the heart of the nation, has a much deeper meaning than comes usually from any party struggle or victory. It was not the triumph of a man, nor of a party: many of those who voted for Mr. Lincoln would have preferred some other man for the office; many who voted for him did not belong to the Republican party. The tremendous results resting on the election compelled men to lay aside their prejudices and party-feelings, and vote for what would save the life of the nation. Fortunately, there were but two issues, and those very intelligible: there was no third party in the field to confuse the judgment of voters. We may assume that the object of both parties was the same, — to save the country, and bring about a peace which should be lasting: they differed as to the measures to be adopted. The Democrats said, in their Chicago Platform, "The war is a failure: we ought immediately to treat with the rebels, suspend hostilities, and endeavor to induce them to return into the Union by agreeing to secure all their rights." The supporters of Mr. Lincoln said, "The war is not a failure, but, so far, a success; and we will carry it on until the Rebellion is crushed, and the Union restored without slavery." The issues, then, were these two: First, shall we treat with the rebels, or shall we conquer them? Second, shall we restore the Union with slavery, or without it? Nothing could be more simple and intelligible than these issues: they were perfectly understood by the whole nation; and the nation, with astonishing unanimity, has declared that we will not treat with the Rebellion, but crush it, and that we will not restore slavery, but abolish it.

Nothing ever occurred to give such confidence in human

nature and in free institutions as this result. Never has a nation shown more faith and courage, a more inflexible purpose, and a more profound conviction, than now. That after these years of war, after such immense losses, after such increased taxation, after such a rise of prices, amid the opposition of European nations, there should be no discouragement, no despondency, but a more united purpose than at first, is certainly a great credit to our institutions, and to human nature. No one foresaw such a result; it was not brought about by the will of man; it came by one of those inspirations, which, from time to time, awaken the better life of a nation. It is a new presage of victory, as much so as when the land outside of Rome on which Hannibal encamped was sold at auction in the city at a high price. We may say of America what Milton said of England: "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam, purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and, in their envious gabble, would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."

LIFE-MEMBERSHIPS IN THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

This subject of life-memberships has of late been sadly overlooked by the friends of the Association. In times past, it was not an uncommon thing for twenty or more new names to be added to the list of life-members in a

year: last year, only six were added; and the year before, but five.

It used to be considered important that every Unitarian clergyman should be a life-member of the Unitarian Association; and it was the custom, as soon as a young man was ordained, for one or more of his parishioners to contribute the $30 necessary to make him such. An evidence of this is found in the fact, that nearly all the elderly clergymen of the denomination are life-members. Of the forty ministers who have received the degree of D.D., all but four are thus connected with the Association. That this excellent custom has not prevailed much of late, an examination of the list of life-members makes very evident. There are, at the present time, some eighty ministers, mostly young men, whose names cannot be found there.

Now, if we believed that this change resulted from a diminished interest in the Association, we should not deem it worth while to write this article. But feeling sure that no other explanation is required than the fact that attention has not been, of late, so often called to the subject as formerly, we are led to make a few suggestions, as a reminder to our friends, of a duty, which, we are confident, would not have been neglected, had it not been forgotten.

We would suggest, therefore, that it is very desirable to have it once more the understanding in all our parishes, that, after a minister is ordained, one of the very first things to be done is to make him a life-member of the Unitarian Association. Only let such an understanding exist, and the matter can be very easily and quickly arranged. If in no other way, some energetic lady can undertake the work; and we are sure that such a one can collect, in a few hours' time, $30 for so worthy an object in any one of the eighty societies referred to.

When the money is paid to the Association, and the certificate given to the pastor, those who have aided in the matter will have the satisfaction of knowing that they have done these three good things, — First, connected their minister for life with an Association in whose welfare he is deeply interested; second, presented him with a life-subscription to its "Monthly Journal," a work which he cannot well do without, and for which he will have to pay every year as long as he lives, if he does not receive it in this better way; and, third, given $30 to a most excellent cause, — one that greatly needs such aid. This will surely be recompense enough for all the money spent and trouble taken.

But ministers are not the only persons who ought to be life-members of the Association. To make it in the highest degree successful, the aid of laymen is needed in the management of its affairs. We would, therefore, further suggest that it would be well for every Unitarian layman who can spare $30 for such a purpose, to make himself, without delay, a life-member.

The Association never needed funds more than it needs them now. So it is a most excellent time for its friends to make themselves life-members. No argument is required to show what a gratifying effect a general movement of this kind would have on our exhausted treasury. One life-membership from every parish in the denomination now sustaining regular preaching would give us more than $6,000.

MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Nov. 14, 1864. — Present, Messrs. Kidder, Clarke, Brigham, Barrett, Winkley, Ware, Sawyer, Smith, and Fox.

The Report of the Committee on the India Mission, laid on the table at the last meeting, for consideration at this, was taken up; and, after some discussion, it was voted to indefinitely postpone the whole subject.

The Finance Committee reported, that there was an immediate want of nearly $2,000 to meet the liabilities of the Association, and recommended that the Treasurer be authorized to sell a portion of the invested funds to supply the need, with the understanding, that, as soon as possible, the amount should be re-invested.

The Committee on New-England Correspondence reported concerning a movement now being made, with good prospect of success, for the formation of a Unitarian society in Montpelier, Vt.; and authority was given to them to send a preacher there for as many Sundays as might seem desirable, at the expense of the Association.

The Committee on Army Missions reported, that their Chairman, Rev. Charles Lowe, had started, a few days before, on a tour of inspection, with the intention of visiting the hospitals at Philadelphia, Baltimore, Annapolis, Washington, Alexandria, Fortress Monroe, and City Point, and, if possible, the Army of the Potomac. He would endeavor to make arrangements at all these places, by which the army tracts and other publications could be faithfully distributed without expense to the Association; and also to ascertain where agents could be most profitably employed.

On recommendation of the Committee on Publications,

a copy of each of the publications of the Association was voted to the society in Houlton, Me., for their parish library.

The Special Committee, appointed to devise plans for increasing the usefulness of the Association, reported that they had decided it best to call a meeting of the Association, to be held in Boston, December 6 and 7, for the purpose of awakening a stronger interest in its work, and thus obtaining the funds so greatly needed to carry it on. The report was adopted; and all the arrangements for the meeting were referred to the Committee, which was enlarged by adding Messrs. Kidder and Smith.

After the transaction of other business, the Board adjourned to Monday, Dec. 5.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

A MEETING of the American Unitarian Association will be holden on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 6 and 7, in Boston, at one of the South-end churches. The object of the meeting is to awaken interest in the work of the Association, by laying before the churches the condition of our funds and the demand for our labor. Drs. BELLOWS and BRIGGS, Rev. Messrs. POTTER, BRIGHAM, LOWE, and others, will address the meeting. We can assure our friends that it will be interesting to them, and we believe it will be profitable to us. We hope the friends of our faith will give us a full attendance.

Clergymen with their wives will be entertained by families in the city. Further particulars will be given in the "Register" and "Inquirer."

RUFUS P. STEBBINS,
CHARLES LOWE,
WARREN SAWYER,
HENRY P. KIDDER,
CHARLES C. SMITH,
Committee.

INTELLIGENCE.

Rev. STEPHEN H. CAMP, a graduate of the Meadville Theological School, in the class of 1863, and recently a chaplain in the Gulf Department, was installed as pastor of the society in Toledo, O., on Wednesday, Oct. 26. The exercises were conducted as follows: Introductory services, and right hand of fellowship, by Rev. A. G. Hibbard, of Detroit, Mich.; sermon and installing prayer, by Rev. George W. Hosmer, D.D., of Buffalo, N.Y.; charge to the pastor, and address to the people, by Rev. Robert Collyer, of Chicago, Ill.; benediction by the pastor.

Rev. SAMUEL W. MCDANIEL was installed as pastor of the society at Neponset Village, Dorchester, Mass., on Thursday, Nov. 3. The order of services was as follows: Anthem; introductory prayer, by Rev. Solon W. Bush, of Roxbury; reading of Scriptures, by Rev. Benjamin H. Bailey, of Dedham; hymn; sermon, by Rev. Eli Fay, of Woburn; prayer of installation, by Rev. William P. Tilden, of Boston; hymn; charge, by Rev. Nathaniel Hall, of Dorchester; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. Thomas J. Mumford, of Dorchester; address to the society, by Rev. James Freeman Clarke, of Boston; concluding prayer, by Rev. Albert B. Vorse, of Littleton; hymn; benediction, by the pastor.

Rev. JAMES SALLAWAY was installed as pastor of the society in Clinton, Mass., on Thursday, Nov. 10. The order of services was as follows: Anthem; invocation, by Rev. John B. Green, of Leominster; reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. E. C. L. Browne, of Bolton; hymn; sermon, by Rev. Ezra S. Gannett, D.D.; prayer of installation, by Rev. Alonzo Hill, D.D., of Worcester; charge, by Rev. George M. Bartol, of Lancaster; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. Rush R. Shippen, of Worcester; address to people, by Rev. Leonard J. Livermore, of Lexington; concluding prayer, by Rev. Henry H. Barber, of Harvard; benediction, by the pastor.

Rev. SETH SALTMARSH is for the present supplying the pulpit of the society in Hubbardston, Mass.

Rev. EUGENE DE NORMANDIE has accepted a call from the societies in Fitzwilliam and Troy, N.H., and will give a portion of his time to each; residing in Fitzwilliam.

Mr. JOHN W. CHADWICK, who has for several months had charge of the Second Society, Brooklyn, N.Y., has received and accepted a call to become their pastor.

Mr. WILLIAM B. BUXTON, a graduate of the Meadville Theological School, in the class of the present year, has accepted a call from the society in Wilton, N.H.

Mr. HORATIO ALGER, jun., a graduate of the Cambridge Divinity School, has accepted a call from the society in Brewsster, Mass.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

1864.				
Oct.	24.	From	Society in Uxbridge, as a donation	$23.00
,,	,,	,,	Society in Groton, as a donation	67.60
,,	,,	,,	Society in Albany, N.Y., as a donation . . .	50.00
,,	,,	,,	Rev. J. F. Lovering, as an annual membership,	1.00
,,	,,	,,	a friend, for India Mission	1.00
,,	25.	,,	Society in Barre, as a donation	51.50
,,	27.	,,	South Church Charity Fund, Portsmouth, N.H., for Army Fund	30.00
,,	,,	,,	a friend, for Army Fund	.50
,,	29.	,,	George Dexter, as an annual membership . .	1.00
Nov.	1.	,,	Society in Taunton, as a donation	108.27
,,	2.	,,	Society in Exeter, N.H., as a donation . 14.00 For Monthly Journal 6.00	20.00
,,	3.	,,	Society in Manchester, for Monthly Journals, additional	3.00
,,	4.	,,	Mrs. Solomon Piper, to make herself a life-member	30.00
,,	7.	,,	Daniel Hammond, "for reading for the soldiers"	10.00
,,	,,	,,	Society in Stow, for Monthly Journals . . .	4.00
,,	9.	,,	Benjamin Cozzens, as a donation	15.00
,,	,,	,,	a friend in Portsmouth, N.H., as a donation .	10.00
,,	,,	,,	a member of the Arlington-street Society, Boston, as a donation	50.00
,,	15.	,,	"X. Y. Z." for Army Fund	20.00
,,	16.	,,	Society in Newport, R.I., as a donation . . .	54.05
,,	17.	,,	Atherton Blight, Philadelphia, as a donation .	100.00
,,	18.	,,	Rev. W. H. Knapp, for Army Fund	1.00
,,	22.	,,	"Cash, Nov. 22"	20.00
,,	23.	,,	Society in South Danvers, as a donation . .	45.00